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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 STATE 047394

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TAGS:

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KWBG,SO,KN,AF,RS,IR,IZ,CE,IS,NO,CZ,EU
SUBJECT: SECRETARY CLINTON'S MEETING WITH SWEDISH
FOREIGN MINISTER CARL BILDT, MAY 5, 2009, 3:15 P.M.,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

1. (U) Classified by EUR Assistant Secretary Daniel
Fried for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

2. (U) May 5, 2009, 3:15 ? 4:00, Washington, D.C.

3. (U) Participants:

U.S.

The Secretary
EUR Assistant Secretary Dan Fried
Special Envoy for Energy Security Amb. Richard
Morningstar
Deputy Spokesman Robert Wood
NSC Director Jeff Hovenier
EUR/NB Norway /Sweden Desk Officer H. Martin McDowell
(Notetaker)

Sweden

Carl Bildt, Foreign Minister
Ambassador Jonas Hafstrom
Bjorn Lyrvall, MFA Political Director
Karin Olofsdotter, Swedish Embassy Deputy Chief of
Mission
Diana Janse, MFA Political Adviser
Irena Busic, MFA Press Secretary

4. (C) Summary: In a wide-ranging discussion with
Swedish Foreign Minister Bildt, the Secretary welcomed
close cooperation with Sweden during its upcoming EU
Presidency, adding that we would seek to make progress
during Sweden's tenure on such difficult challenges as
climate change. The Secretary urged the EU to support
further measures on Iran should direct outreach prove
unsuccessful. The Secretary and Bildt agreed that
resolving the Cyprus issue was important to avoid
derailing Turkish-EU accession. The Secretary urged
Bildt to help keep the EU focused on the Balkans, and
both pledged to coordinate closely on Russia and the
West's support of its vulnerable neighbors. The
Secretary thanked Sweden for efforts on behalf of
detained Americans in Iran and North Korea. Bildt said
that Sweden was looking at the issue of Guantanamo
detainees and asked for U.S. emergency medevac support
if needed for personnel at their new embassy in Iraq.
End Summary.

U.S.-EU Relations

15. (C) Noting that Sweden would be taking over the EU Presidency in July, the Secretary told Bildt that the United States wanted to cooperate closely across a broad agenda to ensure strong transatlantic coordination, including advancing negotiations in the run up to the Copenhagen UN climate change conference (COP 15) in December. The Secretary also noted the outstanding job the Czechs had done organizing the recent U.S.-EU Summit, maintaining a clear, focused agenda. Bildt said the Swedes would aim to keep their own EU meetings "Prague-like." Bildt also suggested the Secretary consider dates in early November for the next U.S.-EU Summit (to be held in Washington), so as not to run too close to COP 15. Ambassador Morningstar pledged to work closely with Sweden on energy security issues and related initiatives. The Secretary added that U.S.-EU cooperation on energy would help counter "disruptive" Russian approaches.

Iran, Middle East Peace

16. (C) The Secretary said the EU could help frame the current discussion within the P5 + 1 framework by making

STATE 00047394 002 OF 003

SUBJECT: SECRETARY CLINTON'S MEETING WITH SWEDI
both expectations and consequences clear to Tehran. The Secretary added that while the U.S. would continue to try to engage Iran in dialogue, she was skeptical such attempts would receive a genuine response. Iran, she noted, appeared to be drawing the wrong lesson from Iraq and North Korea: you could be toppled without obtaining a nuclear weapon, while getting one served their interests and defensive/offensive ambitions.

17. (C) The Secretary noted the importance of EU support for additional measures (i.e., sanctions and the identification of proliferators) that the West could take should dialogue fail. Noting decades of mistrust between the U.S. and Iran, Bildt said that Tehran seemed confused by "mixed signals" from Washington; some talked about dialogue while others opposed rapprochement, he opined. While stating that he was "not a big believer" in sanctions, Bildt said he was willing to look at what else could be done under existing UNSC resolutions.

18. (C) The Secretary agreed that Tehran seemed unsure about how to respond to the offer of U.S. engagement; Bildt said that the Turks had told him that real progress would have to wait until after next month's Iranian presidential elections. In the interim, Bildt suggested, the U.S. should reach out to countries that Iran was targeting (i.e., India, China, Russia, the Gulf states, and Brazil) in its effort to recruit allies to its "us against the West" position. The recent Durban conference in Geneva, said Bildt, where Iran had been roundly condemned for inflammatory remarks but had signed off on text referring to the Holocaust, demonstrated that engagement could lead to progress. The Secretary agreed that attempts to isolate Iran had been fruitless and even counterproductive; the U.S. wanted the international community to reach the same conclusions on nonproliferation and Iran as they did in Geneva: such behavior is unacceptable.

19. (C) While agreeing that Iran remained a "major headache," Bildt said that he disagreed with some (Israel) who argued it was necessary to first resolve issues with Iran before the Middle East peace could progress. Noting her agreement that progress on the region's conflicts would actually help reduce Iranian influence, the Secretary said that the U.S. was already reaching out to the new Israeli Government on the peace process and would be working the issue during a series

of visits to Washington over the next month, including by PM Netanyahu.

Cyprus/Turkey

¶10. (C) The Secretary said she was very concerned that a failure to resolve the ongoing issue of Cyprus could lead to a "meltdown" in December and seriously damage Turkish EU accession prospects. Bildt, calling the Cyprus talks the "single most important issue" facing Europe, agreed that successfully resolving Cyprus would have a positive impact on a number of related issues, whereas failure would essentially block the accession of Turkey -- a "key actor" in the region -- to the EU. The Secretary said it was important to create strong incentives for progress. Bildt said that while both sides recognized the need to settle, they needed a "Dayton-like process" to help them. Bildt added that it was hard for the EU to get directly involved as some viewed it as "part of the problem." He suggested combining UN efforts with strong international pressure and working with the relevant capitals (i.e., Nicosia, Athens, and Ankara) for a final push. The Secretary noted that the U.S. fully supported the UN envoy. Bildt said that the "positive" remarks by President Obama during his recent trip to Turkey had also helped to refocus debate on Turkish EU accession.

Balkans

¶11. (C) The Secretary noted that the U.S. continued to place importance on maintaining progress in Bosnia; holding steady on a progressive track for Kosovo; and using a firm, but fair approach to Serbia. Bildt agreed

STATE 00047394 003 OF 003

SUBJECT: SECRETARY CLINTON'S MEETING WITH SWEDI
that the "problematic" Balkans would remain a key focus under the Swedish EU Presidency; Albania, Macedonia (with its still unresolved name issue), Montenegro and Croatia were all seeking EU accession, Bildt noted. He added that Sweden would be hosting an informal discussion on Bosnia and the Balkans on June 10 in Croatia. The Secretary opined that Peace Implementation Council conditions should be met before Bosnia moves to a purely EU mission. Bildt responded that while the transformation should be gradual, "updated" structures were needed to meet the many still outstanding challenges in Bosnia; for example, he noted that the status of many state assets of the former Yugoslavia remains unclear. Bildt said that the Serbs had a "Mladic issue," but were making efforts.

Russia

¶12. (C) On Russia, the Secretary said that the proof on the recent "reset" would be in the pudding; the U.S. and Sweden should stay in close touch on relations with Moscow, she added. Bildt said that he believed that some Russian concerns (i.e. missile defense), though misguided, were sincere. The Secretary recalled that former Russian President Yeltsin had described to President Clinton Russia's fear of invasion from the West, a legacy of Russian history. Bildt noted that the EU would continue to engage Russia (i.e., recent EU-Russia Permanent Coordination Council (PCC) meeting), but this was difficult when Moscow continued to "target" its "near abroad." The Secretary agreed that Russia seemed determined to keep the Baltic states "on edge," and to interfere in Georgia, Ukraine, and elsewhere in the region. Bildt recalled that Europe faced a similar debate in the early 1990s over NATO and EU expansion, particularly regarding Russian reaction to Baltic accession. Bildt said that in the end, the feeling was

that when the Baltics were actually in NATO, the Russians would learn to accept it, which they had essentially done. It would be hard for Russia to overcome its paranoia or "imperial nostalgia," Bildt added, as long as it was tempted to meddle in its "fragile" near abroad (i.e. Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova).

Americans in Iran, North Korea

¶13. (C) The Secretary said she would appreciate any efforts the Swedish Government could make on behalf of detained journalist Roxana Saberi, adding the U.S. was urging all friends with missions in Tehran to informally reach out to the regime and recommend a pardon or commuted sentence. The Secretary also thanked Sweden for its invaluable assistance on behalf of the two American journalists held in North Korea. Bildt pledged that Sweden would continue to lend aid where possible on both issues.

GTMO, Iraq

¶14. (C) Finally Bildt noted that he had briefly discussed the issue of Guantanamo detainees with A/S Fried. Bildt also raised the possibility of USG support for in extremis medevac support for Swedish personnel at the future Swedish embassy in Iraq; Bildt noted that he had also raised the issue in other meetings and at the NSC.
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